

to the light

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by [andthentheybow](#)

Summary

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Dream is silent for a count of eight- George ticks every second in his head. Then, slowly, Dream breaks into a grin.

“Hello to you too,” he says, laughing in that charming way, and God does George need to get his feelings under control if this is going to work. “Hello, Lucy.”

“Hi, Dream!” Lucy responds, waving at the computer screen. One of her hands comes up to rest on George’s chin, and she squeezes. He bats her arm down, and she pouts up at him.

Notes

the title is funny because george's daughter is named lucy and lucy means 'light' ha ha ha

i'm so clever /j

this was based on [this](#) tweet i'm about to go crazy go stupid cheers

don't be creepy about content creators, these are my interpretations of their personas, if they're uncomfortable this will be deleted, etc etc. this is not meant to speculate on their personal lives or their families, it's just a fun kid fic & fake dating fic.

as my boundaries state, i don't give a shit about people sharing this. give me clout
damnit!!!! /lh

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

Chapter 1

It's not like his friends don't *know* about his daughter. Dream and Sapnap have known about her for nearly as long as George has, when her five-months pregnant mother got in contact and stated she was having a baby. Dream and Sapnap were the ones who made out lists of pros and cons of taking care of the baby versus putting her up for adoption, but when he saw her for the first time, it was all over. Her mother didn't want her, and George absolutely did.

He named her Lucy, and she's his pride and joy, his absolute everything. They've been together through ups and downs, and now she's three and a half years old and walking and talking and potty trained and she recognizes his friends when he shows her pictures of them or puts them on the phone.

So yeah, it's not like his friends don't know about her. Dream and Sapnap have known the whole time, and he's slowly begun telling other people- mostly by accident, like when he was planning on staying a night at Wilbur's and casually dropped that he needed to find Lucy a babysitter.

"Oh, is your cat's name Lucy, then?" Wilbur had asked, and George had frozen.

"My daughter," he had replied, and that had been a fun conversation. And Wilbur can't keep his mouth shut to Tommy, and Tommy can't keep his mouth shut to Tubbo, and slowly, all of his fellow British streamers knew about Lucy. It seemed fitting to tell everyone else he interacts with regularly, so now the whole Dream SMP knows, and a few others.

It's not a bad thing. They ask him how she's doing, how *he's* doing, and they're a good support system. George appreciates them beyond measure.

He has his family, too- his mother watches Lucy frequently, whenever he has plans to stream. There are a few teenagers that live near him that he pays well for babysitting when he goes out to film vlogs. He appreciates all of them, of course- what he does not appreciate is his mother's constant attempts to set him up with her friends' daughters.

"You're doing so well as a single father, Georgie," she'll coo, and George will roll his eyes at the nickname. "But it would be so good for her to have a mother. Or another father! I'm just saying, a second parent would be beneficial. And you need someone like that in your life, too!"

It didn't even start until Lucy was nearly a year old, toddling around George's apartment and

bumping into things while he chased after her. For the first few attempts, it was easy for him to brush it off. After nearly two and a half years, though, he's absolutely gotten sick of it. Which just makes the upcoming trip to the family cottage for the holidays even worse. Both of his older siblings and their families will be there, his parents will be there, and on Christmas itself, his entire extended family will be there. And, just like the previous Christmas, he knows every single one of them will be attempting to find him a partner.

Not this year.

He starts forming the plan nearly four months before the holidays actually begin. He tells his mother that he's seeing someone, and she's completely overjoyed. Of course, she wants to know everything about them, so George makes up a few details here and there, ignoring how similar it sounds to his relationship with Dream. Three months before Christmas, his mother guesses that he's dating Dream.

He goes along with it. He's already practically in love with Dream anyways, they flirt all the time both on and off stream, why wouldn't it make sense?

He tells Sapnap and Karl two months before Christmas, who think it's hilarious. They don't stop laughing for nearly three minutes while George sits there on the discord call, Lucy sleeping on his chest, drool coating his shoulder. He doesn't tell Dream until one month before Christmas, when Dream texts and asks if he wants to call, and George agrees.

"Dream," he says, as soon as he can see the other. He's breathless- he's just grabbed Lucy from where she was chasing after Cat, and he settles her on his lap quickly. He spits it out before he gets too nervous and backs out. "Will you pretend to be my boyfriend for Christmas?"

Dream is silent for a count of eight- George ticks every second in his head. Then, slowly, Dream breaks into a grin.

"Hello to you too," he says, laughing in that charming way, and God does George need to get his feelings under control if this is going to work. "Hello, Lucy."

"Hello, Dream!" Lucy responds, waving at the computer screen. One of her hands comes up to rest on George's chin, and she squeezes. He bats her arm down, and she pouts up at him.

"So, will you?" George asks.

“You’re asking me this in front of her?” Dream says. “What if she snitches?”

“Lucy’s no snitch. Are you, Lu?” She looks up at him, still pouting. “Nah. Here, watch. Lucy. I’m dating Dream.”

“Duh,” Lucy says, because that’s what his sister had said when he told her over speakerphone a few weeks after his mother accused him.

“See? Flawless,” George says. Dream wheezes. Lucy mimics him. It’s incredibly endearing, George thinks.

“We’ll talk about it when someone’s asleep,” Dream says. “Lucy, do you wanna watch your dad and I play chess?”

“Yes!” Lucy cries, and George has no idea how chess is entertaining to a three-and-a-half year old, but somehow it is. They play a few games and then George excuses himself to put her in bed. He stands behind her as she stands on her step-stool and attempts to brush her teeth, and then he combs out her hair and tucks her into bed.

“Is Dream my dad, too?” she asks him as he pulls the covers up to her chin.

“He’s Dream, sweetheart,” George responds, and he kisses her on the forehead before he turns out the lights and returns to his office.

“So,” Dream says as soon as he sits down. George groans, and Dream laughs. “Long day?”

“Not that bad,” George says, yawning. “I’m just tired.” He’s been attempting to fix his and Lucy’s sleep schedules so they’re on a normal track, considering they’re going to be spending two weeks with the family in barely a month.

“Okay, just tired,” Dream says. “So. You want me to pretend to be your boyfriend?”

“Funny story,” George tells him. “My whole family already thinks we’re together.”

Dream stares at him. George counts to seven.

“Okay,” Dream says eventually, his expression unreadable. “You know, my family thought we were, too, until I. You know. Told them otherwise.”

“Well, I didn’t tell them otherwise,” George says, rubbing his face. “Because my mom’s been having a go at me for more than two years now trying to set me up with people, and I got sick of it. So I told her I was seeing someone, and she guessed you. And I didn’t see fit to make up a whole person, so-”

“George,” Dream says, and he’s cracking a smile now. It makes George feel slightly better. Seeing Dream smile always makes him feel better. “I’m not mad, or anything. You could’ve told me sooner, you know. Now what? You want me to fly out for Christmas?”

“Two weeks,” George confirms. “In the family cottage. We’d have our own room, and we’d only have to deal with the extended family for a few days.”

“What would we tell the fans?” Dream asks.

“They’d be thrilled, are you kidding?” George says. “We take a few pictures and blur out your face and they’ll go crazy. They’ll be so happy about us being together that they won’t be mad if we don’t stream for a bit.”

He leaves off *besides, we wanted to meet up anyways and I was too worried about leaving Lucy. Now I won’t have to worry about that.* He tries to convey it with his eyes, and he thinks Dream gets it. Dream always gets it.

“Okay,” Dream says. “Okay. So I fly out to you, we stay with your family for two weeks, and we pretend we’re dating. How long have we been dating?”

“You’ll do it?” George asks, and he’s a little shocked, honestly.

“Of course I’ll do it, you’re my best friend,” Dream snorts, and there’s a pang in George’s heart. “Sapnap’s going home for the holidays anyways, and my family won’t miss me if they know I’m with you.”

There’s a lot to unpack there. George tries not to think about it.

“Okay,” George says, and he can’t stop himself from beaming. “Okay, great. Um.”

“So how long have we been dating?” Dream repeats. “So I know the story.”

“Eight months? Give or take,” George replies. “We can work out the details and everything, match our stories up- thank you for doing this. Seriously. I appreciate it so much-”

“Dude, it’s no problem,” Dream laughs. “You don’t need to thank me. Besides, free vacation. You’re paying for my ticket.”

George laughs with him, and he knows that everything’s going to work out fine. For better or for worse, he and Dream (and Lucy) are now in this together.

Over the course of the next few weeks, they’re able to hammer out a perfect story- it was in the chaos of March that they realized they liked each other, Dream asked George out over a Discord call, they haven’t seen each other in person yet so all their dates have been virtual. They told Sapnap right away and the rest of their friends after a month, and they haven’t decided to tell the fans yet because they want to keep some small semblance of privacy. His family will believe that, they know the general public has no idea Lucy even exists.

It’s the perfect story. So when his mother stops by after he finishes a stream a week before they’re due to leave, he’s ready. She drops Lucy into his arms and he hugs her tightly as his mother lets herself in.

“So,” she says. “Are you going to Dream for Christmas, or is he coming here? Because the family is under the impression that you and Lu will be joining us-”

“Dream’s coming here,” George says, and the smile on his mother’s face is worth the two and a half years of hell she’s put him through trying to set him up.

“Oh, wonderful!” she exclaims. “Everyone will be so pleased, we’ve all been wanting to meet him for so long- and I’m sure you’re *thrilled*, dear, getting to meet him for the first time- oh, it’s just lovely.” She hugs him, trapping Lucy between them, and his daughter squirms. His mother pulls back and continues smiling at him.

“Thanks, Mom,” he says. “I am thrilled.” Of course he’s thrilled, because even if he’s not really dating Dream, they’re still best friends, and George wants nothing more than to meet him in person, hug him, be able to actually *see* him-

“I’ll be on my way, then,” she says, pretending to wipe a few tears away. “I’ll see you soon, your father will be texting you details and everything, I’m assuming you’re fine sharing a room? Lucy can sleep with the other kids this year, she’s big enough-”

“That’ll be fine, Mom,” he tells her, and she gives him one more pat on the head and kisses Lucy’s cheek before she’s waving and off.

The week practically flies by. On the day before Dream is due to arrive, George and Sapnap do a six-hour long CS:GO stream. His sister is watching Lucy for the day, giving him plenty of time to give the fans their fix.

“Alright, guys,” he says as the stream is coming to an end. “Important announcement. I know, my important announcements are famous, and it’s been in the stream title. So go on Twitter, yell at everyone that it’s starting, I’m talking, I’m talking, and... okay.” He grins at the camera, and Sapnap laughs. “I’m really sorry, but I’m not going to be streaming for the next couple of weeks. The holidays are coming up, and I’m going to be with my family for that time. Maybe I’ll find some time to stream, but to make it up to you, I have a surprise. Sapnap?”

“Oh, yeah, baby!” Sapnap cries over Discord. “It’s a great surprise, guys, don’t worry.”

“So, the surprise is...” George says, teasing them like he always does. Chat is absolutely losing their minds. “Someone’s guessed it, I see it flying by, and I’m sure it’ll be trending soon. So, yes! Dream is coming to stay with me for the holidays.”

Sapnap cheers. Chat loses their damn minds. There’s the sound of someone joining the Discord call, and Dream’s already wheezing.

“My flight leaves in six hours and I’m not packed yet!” he cries, and chat goes even crazier than they already had been. George checks- he’s got nearly three hundred thousand people watching him laugh with his best friends.

“So I’ll see you all in a few weeks, and happy holidays!” he cries, and he ends the stream. Dream and Sapnap continue laughing over their call.

“Dream!” George yells. “Go pack, you idiot!”

“I will, I will!” Dream says, and he leaves the call. George continues talking to Sapnap for a bit before there’s a knock on his door, and then the sound of his sister letting herself in. George bids his best friend goodbye and heads to greet his daughter, who’s already running straight into his legs.

Oh, yeah, George thinks. He’s got this. He’s going to make it through these two weeks without letting on to his family that he and Dream aren’t actually dating, and he’s going to make it through these two weeks without letting on to Dream that he’s a little bit in love.

And he’s going to do it all while being a damn good father. He’s going to pick Dream up from the airport in seventeen hours, and he’s going to introduce his best friend to his daughter, and everything is going to be fine.

Chapter 2

Chapter Notes

i'm sorry about the opening line i had to do it to em

Everything is not going to be fine.

Dream thought he would have this in the bag. He'd meet his best friend, meet his best friend's daughter, and then meet his best friend's entire family. He'd spend two weeks having fun with said family, he would pretend to be a doting boyfriend, and he would not let on that he's in love with said best friend.

This, apparently, is going to be more difficult than he thought it was, considering the plane hasn't even landed and he's planning out several (very dramatic) confessions of undying love. Mostly because of the selfie George sent of himself and Lucy just before the plane took off, and because of the fact that his heart is practically beating out of his chest, he's so in love.

It's not an *issue*, per say. He doesn't like to think of being in love as an issue. It's something beautiful, certainly, the fact that you can love a person so much you want to spend every second with them, even if you've never met them in person. It's a good feeling, the butterflies in your stomach. Dream's always been of that opinion, and being so forcefully in love he feels like he might pass out doesn't change that.

Or that feeling might come from the turbulence. Either way, staring down at that picture of George and Lucy for the umpteenth time in the past seven hours just makes him more and more nervous. He doesn't even want to *think* about the possibility that Lucy might not like him, although he's spoken to her enough times over Discord calls and she's always seemed to like him. But things are different in person.

Hell, what if *George* doesn't like him in person? And then they had to spend two weeks together, with Dream helplessly in love, and George practically hating him. That's the worst case scenario, certainly- Dream can deal with it if George's family doesn't like him, he'd be disappointed if Lucy doesn't like him, but he'd be *heartbroken* if George doesn't like him.

A voice in his head that sounds suspiciously like Sapnap's from barely ten hours ago tells him that he's being ridiculous. George is going to like him just fine, it's going to be no different from when they're on twelve-hour calls and sending weird texts and hanging out online for hours on end. It's

going to be fine.

But what if? that little malicious part of his brain says, and Dream tries his best to bat it down. The plane shakes at a very inopportune time, sending his rolling heart through the roof and up into the stars. God, he's a wreck.

A hot wreck, Sapnap's voice says, like he always does when Dream goes on rambles about his anxiety. He usually just whacks his best friend lightly, but right now Sapnap isn't here. Right now he's sitting next to the window on a plane and there's a businessman to his right and he just wants to be in the UK *now* so he can get this first meeting over with.

He puts on his sleep playlist and closes his eyes. Maybe he can get a quick nap in before he lands. George had texted him beforehand and said Lucy was going to be with his mother, so Dream only needs to worry about meeting George first, and then he can worry about everyone else.

He ends up sleeping for the entire three hours, and he's awoken by the flight attendant's announcement that they're going to be landing shortly. He tightens his seatbelt and makes sure his carry-on bag is secure, and his half-asleep mind continues racing with different thoughts of things that could go wrong.

But nothing goes wrong, not when the plane lands, not when he disembarks. He slings his backpack over both shoulders and makes his way toward baggage claim. George supposedly arranged for an Uber driver to pick him up, considering they half-revealed what time Dream's flight was and he hasn't actually face revealed yet, and they're a bit worried about being overwhelmed at the airport. After he grabs his baggage, he hears someone calling his name- his real name, not Dream- and turns to see a middle-aged man that looks... frankly, looks a lot like George.

"Hi," the man says, holding out a hand. "Hope you don't mind, George showed me your picture so I knew who I was looking for. I'm Edward, but you can call me Ed."

Dream shakes the man's hand, but continues staring at him blankly. An Uber driver, George said. Not...

"Are you- uh- George's dad?" Dream asks tentatively, and Ed laughs.

"Yeah, I am," he confirms. "I take it George didn't mention I'd be picking you up?"

“He did not,” Dream laughs, getting his confidence back now that he knows who he’s talking to. He didn’t think he’d be meeting the parents so soon, but this is fine, it’s fine, Dream is good at making people like him. Based on the smile Ed is giving him, he’s already in the clear here. God bless George and his apparent tendency to talk about Dream in a positive light.

“That’s alright, I’ll just be driving you back to his place. Figured we can chat a bit.” He’s got a twinkle in his eyes that Dream takes to mean he’s about to get a shovel talk, if you hurt my son they’ll never find your body type thing, but instead Ed just talks to him about soccer for the entire car ride (“football,” Ed corrects him when he calls it soccer).

“I’ll be seeing you tomorrow, then,” Ed says as he pulls up to a large apartment block. “This is it.” He pats Dream on the shoulder and hops out of the car, waving to someone.

There’s a person waiting on the steps leading up to the door, staring down at a phone. Dream can’t help but break into a grin as he gets out and walks around the side of the car. It’s George- of course it’s George- and he stands up when he sees Dream pausing at the edge of the sidewalk.

“You’re here!” he says gleefully, and the next thing Dream knows there’s a body slamming into his, strong arms being wrapped around his middle. He laughs and wraps his own arms around George, hugging him tightly, and something just *clicks*. This is good, his heart tells him. This is where he’s meant to be, holding George in his arms. They stand there for a long time, long enough that Ed clears his throat and they sheepishly pull apart.

“Thanks, Dad,” George says, moving to grab Dream’s suitcase. “I appreciate it.”

“Not a problem, kid,” Ed says. “I’ll send your mum over with Lucy in a bit.”

“Sounds good,” George replies cheerfully, and they stand on the sidewalk and watch as Ed drives off. “We should-”

“Right,” Dream says, reaching out to grab his suitcase. George swats his arm away and drags it up to the stairs himself, then turns back.

“Alright, you can take it,” he concedes, and Dream wheezes. George is still beaming at him, and he never wants to leave this place, he wants to stand on this stupid sidewalk forever and never leave George’s side.

Instead, he drags his bags up to George's two-floor apartment.

"Funny story," George says as Dream drops his backpack in the living room. "I don't have a guest room, so I can sleep on the couch-"

"We're gonna be sharing a bed for the next two weeks, aren't we?" Dream snorts. "We can just share." He mentally curses himself for saying it as soon as it comes out of his mouth, but George just grins at him endearingly.

"Right," he says, and leads Dream up the stairs and into the familiar space of George's bedroom, the place of many late-night FaceTimes and Discord calls. He flops onto George's bed, and his best friend whacks him with a pillow. "Get off the bed, heathen, you're probably all sweaty and shit."

"Oh, please," Dream mutters. He does feel kind of gross from the ten and a half hour flight, so he'll probably bully George into letting him use the shower soon. He wants to make a good first impression on Lucy. He tells George as much.

"Lucy's three and a half, she doesn't care what you smell like," George huffs, but he's laughing. "Come on, do you want something to eat?"

They get McDonald's, and it tastes exactly the same as it does in Florida. They go through Twitter and share the funniest memes with each other, tweets about how based on what Dream said on stream the previous day he's in the UK right now. George asks permission, and when Dream grants it, he posts a picture of Dream's hands holding his phone in front of the empty McDonald's container.

He's here is all George says, and Dream watches in live time as Twitter practically explodes. He lifts his phone to take a picture of George, giggling down at his own phone, and posts it quickly with the caption *I'm here*.

"Dream!" George cries when he sees the picture, and Dream wheezes.

"I couldn't help it, you looked so cute!" he says, and he briefly thinks he's overstepped a boundary, that maybe flirting in person is different than online or on stream, but he's surprised to see that George's face just gets red and he laughs.

“I guess I’ll let it slide,” he says. “Just this once.” Dream grins at him. They clean up the kitchen and George gives him a tour of the apartment- Lucy’s room looks exactly like what he would picture a three-and-a-half year old’s room to look like. They’ve just finished the tour when there’s a knock on the door.

“That’ll be them,” George says tersely, and he looks as nervous as Dream feels. “You ready?”

“To meet your *daughter* ?” Dream snorts. “I was born ready.”

George laughs and moves to open the door, and immediately there’s a small blur of movement throwing itself at his legs.

“Dad!” comes the shriek from Lucy, and she’s even smaller in person. Dream just stares, half frozen in place, and George picks his daughter up and walks over to Dream.

“Lucy,” he says, transformed immediately from the giggly mess Dream is used to and into the father figure he’s come to know over calls. “This is Dream.”

Lucy- Lucy *beams* at him, proud and bright and exactly like George. She looks *so much* like George in nearly every way- same dark hair, same eyes, same crinkles in her cheeks when she smiles. She’s tiny and precious and she reaches out for Dream immediately.

Dream likes to think he’s good with kids, so he lets George transfer her weight into his arms, and Lucy squeezes his neck and says, very loudly and directly into his ear, “Hi Dream!”

Dream laughs and hugs her back. “It’s very nice to meet you, Lucy,” he says, much quieter than she was to him, and she pulls back to put her hands on either side of his face, then smashes his cheeks together.

“Yes!” she cries. George laughs.

“She said she’s been wanting to do that for a while,” George provides, and Dream wheezes. Lucy continues beaming at him, and it’s then that Dream realizes there’s another person, leaning against the now-closed door, a middle-aged woman that has to be George’s mother. He moves to put Lucy

down, but instead she just hangs from around his neck and dangles in the air. Standing back up, he shifts her weight to one arm and holds out his other hand to George's mother.

"Hi," he says. "I'm Dream."

"I know, dear," she says, shaking his hand firmly. "You can call me Liz. It's very nice to meet you, finally."

"It's nice to meet you too," Dream says honestly, and he can see so much of George in both of his parents, and he wants to say something like *thank you for creating one of my favorite people*, but he feels like that would be too cheesy. "Thank you for having me," he says instead, and she waves him off.

"Thank you for coming," she tells him. "I never thought George would have someone, I'm sure you know I've been trying to set him up for *so* long, but I suppose it's always been you, hasn't it?" She finishes this with a firm smile, and Dream... Dream has absolutely no idea how to respond to that. He just nods weakly, and Lucy squishes his cheeks together again, clearly upset that all of the attention isn't on her.

"Thanks, Mum," George says, wrapping one arm around her shoulders. "We'll see you tomorrow, yeah?"

"Yeah," Liz agrees, and she slips out of the apartment as quickly as she came in. George huffs and turns back to Dream and Lucy- she's finally begging to be put down, so Dream lets her go easily, watches as she runs off, yelling about how she's going to show him her favorite toys.

"So?" George asks, and he slips under one of Dream's arms. Dream laughs and wraps his other arm around George's shoulders, holding him close. He tries to ignore the way George rests his head on Dream's chest, and they just stand there for a moment.

"I love her," Dream says honestly, and George laughs. Lucy comes running back in, dragging a giant stuffed unicorn and several other things, once again demanding their attention. It's going to be a long two weeks, Dream thinks, but it's going to be two of the best weeks of his life. He's sure of it.

Chapter 3

“Okay,” George says as soon as Lucy is in bed. Dream is sitting on the couch, surrounded by stuffed animals that Lucy insisted they could put away tomorrow in the morning before they leave. George grabs a large whale that’s sitting next to Dream and moves it out of the way.

“Hey,” Dream pouts, reaching down to pick the whale up. “Don’t be mean to Bethany.”

“You memorized the names of her stuffed animals?” George asks, one eyebrow raised.

“You haven’t?” Dream counters, hugging the whale to his chest. George snickers.

“Of course I have, I know that’s Bethany,” he replies. “I just- wasn’t expecting you to. I wasn’t expecting you to be so good with her at all, honestly.”

“I’ve babysat,” Dream protests. He holds out his arms, and George rolls his eyes before he sinks down onto the couch and lets Dream pull him into a hug.

“We’re not gonna have any trouble convincing my family we’re together if you’re this clingy,” he mutters, and Dream pulls back, a worried expression on his face.

“Is it too much?” he asks. “I can stop, I just- it’s really good to see you.”

“You don’t need to stop,” George says, shaking his head, and Dream relaxes.

“Good, because I don’t want to.” George grins and relaxes further into his best friend’s embrace, trying to hide the fact that his heart is pounding from the close contact. With Lucy awake there was a buffer between him and his feelings; now, there’s two layers of clothing between his secret love and his beating heart.

“Anyways,” George says. “Um- ground rules. For being around my family. You already have our cover story memorized, yeah?”

“Of course,” Dream snorts. “Do you?”

“Duh.”

Dream gives him a look, and he has to actually hold back a giggle. He leans his head on Dream’s chest, and Dream shakes his head mockingly.

“What else do I have to know?” he asks. “Who’s gonna be with us for the first two weeks?”

“My parents, who you’ve already met,” George lists. “My older sister, her husband, their two kids, and my older brother, his girlfriend, and their daughter. The rest of the family will be there for the holidays, but for most of it, it’s just immediate family.”

“I can do that,” Dream nods. “They all... think we’ve been dating for eight months?”

“Nine months now,” George corrects him. “And yeah. My mother guessed, I told my sister over the phone, and she told my brother about an hour later.”

“Shocker,” Dream mutters. “And they just... weren’t surprised?”

“Dream,” George says, sending him a look. “Half the internet thinks we’re dating. Is it that far-fetched that my family would think the same?”

“No,” Dream admits. “I guess not. So... they’re expecting us to be touchy, right? I mean, first time seeing each other, and all that...”

“Are you asking about my physical boundaries?” George asks, one eyebrow raised, and Dream nods, his face a bit red. And holy fuck, George thinks, because yeah he wants to kiss Dream and maybe do a little bit more than that, but he can’t exactly say that, can he? So instead of confessing his undying love, which the irrational part of his brain is screaming at him to do, he just shrugs. “I don’t care. We’re both touch-starved, aren’t we?”

“You don’t need to call us out like that,” Dream grumbles, and George giggles. “At least you have your daughter. I have Sappnap, and you saw what he was like with Karl.”

“That’s true,” George laughs. “Well, either way. My family won’t be surprised if we’re touchy, no, but it’s not like they’re expecting us to be joined at the hip, either.”

He glances up at Dream, and he can practically hear his best friend thinking. Dream’s staring at the wall, and George reaches up to poke him under the eye. He scowls and grabs George’s hand, holding onto it tightly, and George laughs again.

“What are you thinking about?” he asks, and Dream goes bright red.

“Well- what if there’s mistletoe?” he says, voice quiet, and George snorts.

“Then you kiss me, idiot,” he replies. “It’s not that hard.”

“But like- what if your family can tell it’s our first time kissing?” Dream goes impossibly even more red, and George’s eyes widen. Is Dream really saying what George thinks he’s saying? Is this- Jesus Christ, George can’t do this right now, late at night pressed against each other on the couch, and-

“Are you implying that we should practice kissing?” he asks, cutting off his train of thought. Dream goes *even more red*, which George didn’t think was possible at this point.

“Yes?” Dream squeaks out. “It’s- that’s weird, we don’t have to, your family isn’t even here, forget I said anything-”

George reaches out with one hand, cupping the side of Dream’s face, and Dream instantly goes quiet. George’s tongue darts out to lick his lips, and Dream glances down.

“Okay,” George says. “We can practice. Just the once, so that it seems believable.”

“Right,” Dream says, voice hushed. “Believable.”

George is the one to lean in closer, but Dream is the one to actually press their lips together. There

aren't any fireworks, or butterflies, or things exploding in the back of his mind. It just... feels good. Feels right. Feels like this is what George was meant to be doing.

Dream's hands fly to George's waist, and George's other hand comes up to rest on Dream's neck. They're both twisted on the couch uncomfortably, so George swings one leg over and settles on Dream's lap.

"This okay?" he asks, pulling back slightly. Dream chases after him, resting their foreheads together.

"More than," he replies, and George bends down to reach him again. Their lips collide in another passionate embrace, and fuck, George doesn't think he's going to be able to stop himself if it goes any further. Thank God Dream must have some common sense, because he pulls back abruptly.

"Okay," he says. "Cool. First kiss done."

George doesn't want it to be done. George wants to keep kissing him, again and again and again, and he never wants to stop. But his daughter is sleeping in the other room and he reminds himself that this is pretend, this is fake, the flirting they do is for shits and giggles and this is just to make things realistic.

"Right," George says, clearing his throat and climbing off Dream's lap. "Mission success."

Dream snorts at that, and George holds out a hand to pull him up. They make their way upstairs and to bed- Dream claims he isn't tired, jet lag and all that, so George offers to let him play Minecraft on the old PC in his room.

"I don't want to keep you awake," Dream frowns, and George shrugs. "Come on, George, I know you're secretly a light sleeper."

Because for all the jokes about George sleeping through everything, most of the time it's because he's busy with Lucy, because she's sick or the babysitter cancels last minute or some other type of emergency that has him refusing to leave her side. Lucy could cough from the other side of the apartment and it would wake George up, honestly.

"Then play on your phone, or something, I'm going to bed," George says with a grin, and Dream

rolls his eyes.

George doesn't remember falling asleep, but he knows Dream is still sitting up in bed next to him when he does. At some point he wakes up and the water in the bathroom is running, so he figures Dream is taking a shower and goes back to bed. In the morning, George wakes up curled against Dream's side.

He figured it would happen, that he would gravitate toward Dream in his sleep, but that doesn't make it any less awkward. Dream's awake and looking down at him, smiling gently.

"Morning," he says, and George groans and buries his head in Dream's chest. Dream laughs, and George just presses his face down harder.

"Morning," he replies eventually, pulling back. "Did you sleep at all?"

"A few hours," Dream says. "I slept most of the plane ride, I'm ready. No jet lag for me."

"That's what Ranboo said, and it messed him up good," George points out. "Don't jinx yourself."

"I'm a master of sleep schedules," Dream insists. "I'm not going to jinx myself, I'm too cool for that." George rolls his eyes and pulls himself out of bed, and Dream follows him like a lost puppy as he makes his way to Lucy's room.

"Lulu," he says in a sing-song voice, tapping lightly on the door, and there's a loud giggle. "I'm coming in."

He opens the door, and there's no sign of his daughter. Dream grabs his arm, looking worried, and George just laughs. He points toward the large pile of stuffed animals on the ground, and without another moment of hesitation, steps forward and plunges his arms into it. There's a loud screech, and he pulls out a squirming Lucy and presents her to Dream.

"See?" he says.

"You spoil her rotten," Dream tells him, looking at the toys scattered around the room. He looks

Lucy in the eyes- she's stopped kicking and is now limp in George's arms, laughing to herself. "Your dad spoils you, you know that?"

"Yep!" she cries gleefully, kicking again. George puts her down and watches as she barrels directly into Dream's legs. "We're going north today!"

"That we are," George says, ruffling her hair. "Come on, I'll make pancakes for breakfast."

"YES!" Lucy screams, and Dream laughs. "Pancakes are a special o- occa- Dad, what's the word?"

"Special occasion?" George offers, already in the kitchen. Lucy cries out with glee again.

"Yes!" she says. "A special occasion food!"

She continues chattering to Dream about her extensive knowledge of Disney princesses- her favorite is Mulan, followed closely by Ariel- while George makes them breakfast. Then there's a rush of George throwing two weeks' worth of stuff into suitcases while Dream keeps Lucy occupied by continuing the discussion about which Disney animal would be the best to have as a pet. Then it's a matter of getting Lucy ready while Dream brings the luggage downstairs.

By the time George's parents arrive, they're perfectly presentable and ready to go. They cram themselves into the backseat of his mother's van, George squashed in the middle between the carseat and Dream. They talk with his parents the whole three hours' worth of driving, and George is honestly impressed by how much Dream gets along with them and even includes Lucy in the conversation. It's perfect. Everything seems perfect.

It's when they're almost there that Dream takes his hand and laces their fingers together. George tries to hide his smile. Two weeks of pretending to be Dream's boyfriend starts now- two weeks of hiding his feelings from Dream but maybe letting them slip to his family. He makes eye contact with his mother in the rearview mirror, and she's beaming at him.

Two weeks.

Chapter 4

Chapter Notes

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Dream is, in all honesty, terrified of George's family. He thought his family was chaotic enough- they're nothing compared to the Davidsons. Of course, he thinks, George had to get his twenty-four-year-old-gremlin persona that he puts on for streams and vlogs from somewhere, Dream just wasn't expecting it to come from the very real personalities of his family.

Their car is the first to arrive at the (frankly) very large cottage that they're going to be spending two weeks in. Ed and Liz tell them to make themselves at home- each couple has their own room, and the kids share a large room with two sets of bunk beds. Lucy bounces on their bed while he and George unpack, and then George makes him do all the work of unpacking Lucy.

"I don't even know where to put half this stuff!" Dream protests, but George laughs with Lucy in his arms as he sits on the bottom bunk of one of the beds. Lucy wanders off at some point, and George follows her, and there's the sound of children screaming shortly after. Dream wanders around the house, trying to find his way back to the entrance, and when he does, he's greeted with a mass of people he doesn't recognize.

The first thing he registers is the sound of an awed gasp, and then there's a small gathering of children around his legs. He manages to make eye contact with George through the throng of people, and George just gives him a sympathetic grin. Looking back down at the kids, he realizes that Lucy is standing on top of his feet, arms wrapped around one leg, and is showing him off like she displayed her stuffed animal collection the previous night.

"...and he's very good, so be nice to him," Lucy is saying, and then she tugs on Dream's hand. "This is where you say hi." He flushes, because he can tell that the other adults are sort-of watching him now, so he focuses his attention on the kids in front of him instead.

"Hi!" the oldest of the kids, maybe eight years old, says before Dream can even open his mouth. "I *love* your videos."

"You've seen my videos!" Dream says, eyes wide, because yeah, logically he knew that there were probably young kids that watched his stuff, he's seen some of the nice comments that their parents leave and he appreciates every single one of them, he just didn't expect one of those kids to be

George's nephew. He kneels down so he's closer to eye level with all of them, and Lucy clings to his shoulders.

"Of course!" the boy says. "The Manhunts are my favorite."

"I like the ones where you can't see things," another one of the kids, a girl maybe six years old, chimes in. "They're funny."

"Harper hasn't seen any, she's too little," the boy tells him, patting a girl, maybe Lucy's age, on the head. "But Olivia and I watch them all!"

"Hi," the child deemed Harper says shyly. "I'm four."

"She's very excited about being four," the boy explains. "I'm Mark, and it's nice to meet you!"

Mark, Olivia, Harper, Lucy, Dream recites in his head. Mark and Harper are clearly siblings, based on their sandy-brown hair, and Dream picks out an adult man with hair of the same shade. Olivia looks like a slightly older, tanner, much taller version of Lucy.

"It's nice to meet you too," Dream says excitedly, because he knows how to act around children, he's totally got this. "I have fun making all the videos, so I'm glad you guys like them."

"Of course we like them!" Mark says. He lowers his voice conspiratorially. "Don't tell George, but you're my favorite."

"Oh, yeah?" Dream laughs, and Mark nods vigorously. He holds out his hand for a fist-bump, and the kid gladly provides. "What about you, Olivia?"

"Sapnap's my favorite," she says proudly, and Dream laughs.

"Sapnap's pretty good," he agrees. Harper is still staring at him with something akin to terror, or maybe it's just shyness and Dream is misinterpreting it, so he holds out a hand for a high five. She grins and slaps her tiny hand against his, and then Lucy grabs her hand and runs off, screaming about the bunk beds. Mark and Olivia follow, arguing about who gets which bed, leaving Dream

alone with the adults.

He stands up, rubbing the back of his neck sheepishly, and two people approach him right away. One is the man with sandy-brown hair, and the other is a tall blonde woman.

“Thanks for being so nice to them,” the woman says, holding out a hand. “I’m Hannah, Olivia’s mine, it’s so nice to finally meet you.”

“You, too,” Dream says, assuming this is George’s brother’s girlfriend. He shakes the man’s hand as well.

“Scott,” the man introduces. “Mark and Harper are my two little gremlins.”

“I’m- uh- Clay,” Dream says with an awkward smile, because he doesn’t really want to introduce himself to these two Actual Real Adults as ‘Dream’, and they both chuckle.

“It’s alright, we already know you as Dream,” Hannah says.

“George doesn’t shut up about you, every holiday it’s Dream-this and Dream-that,” Scott adds. “Between that and the watch parties every time one of you releases a new video, it feels like you’re already part of the family.”

Oh, God, Dream thinks. Not only have these kids seen his videos, but George’s in-laws and probably siblings have, too. Which, alright, it’s not necessarily unideal, at least these people know what he’s like, especially around George.

“Trust me, it was *not* a surprise when James told me George was dating you,” Hannah says, glancing over at a man slightly shorter than George, but with a similar stature, talking to Ed and Liz. Dream can’t help but let his gaze flit over to George, talking with his sister by the door, and Scott and Hannah both chuckle.

“See, he’s got that lovesick look in his eyes,” Scott points out, and Dream blushes, which makes them both laugh harder. “Don’t worry, I’m sure we’ll pull you into the unofficial in-law fold soon enough.”

“Unofficial in-law fold?” Dream asks, and they point to themselves.

“James and I aren’t married yet, which is why it’s unofficial,” Hannah elaborates. “And those three monsters that call themselves siblings are so horrible together, that we banded together to try and be a force against them.”

“Trust me, it’s good that you’re here, I doubt George could say no to you,” Scott says with a mischievous grin. “Maybe we’ll win the annual snowball fight this year.”

“Oh, no, you’ve got it all wrong,” Dream laughs, starting to feel more comfortable now that he’s gotten a feel for these people. “I’m the one that can’t say no to George, it’s horrible.” They both laugh, and then George is at Dream’s side, slipping under one arm and grinning up at him.

“Oh, they’re gonna be like you and James on your first Christmas,” Scott says with a fake gag. “Damn new couples.”

George rolls his eyes and bites back with some snappy retort, but Dream isn’t listening. He’s too busy being stared down by George’s sister, who looks like she might stab him. If he’s going to be getting the Talk from anyone, he decides, it’s her. She seems to come to some sort of decision and strides over, dragging George’s brother with her, and shoves through Scott and Hannah. The two part like this is a completely normal thing to happen, both still grinning.

“Dream,” George’s sister says firmly, holding out a hand. Dream shakes it, keeping one arm wrapped around George. “I’m Amelia. And if you hurt my brother or his daughter in any way, shape, or form, please know that they will never find your body.”

“I’m James, and I’m not a part of this,” George’s brother says, and Dream shakes his hand, too. “Nice to finally meet you, man.”

“You, too,” Dream finds himself saying. The three siblings don’t look the same, certainly, but Dream can easily tell that they’re siblings.

“We’ve heard a lot about you,” James tells him. “All bad things, don’t worry.”

“Liar,” George huffs, and the kids come running back down the stairs, all clamoring around their parents’ legs and demanding to go play outside. Dream doesn’t really get to talk to any of the adults

for a brief period of time after that- George coerces him into trying to get Lucy's coat on, which is apparently a whole ordeal that Dream wasn't warned about. Once it's done and Lucy has buried herself in Dream's arms, sniffing and red in the eyes, George tells him that he did a pretty good job for his first time.

"She's crying," Dream points out.

"Am not," Lucy protests from somewhere around his chest. She pulls back and wipes at her eyes, then provides a wide grin. "See?"

With that, she runs off, joining the other kids in the spacious backyard. George just laughs.

"When I put her coat on, she doesn't talk to me for three hours afterward," he tells Dream, and Dream shakes his head with a laugh and follows George outside.

Which is where he gets his real first clue of how chaotic this family is- Ed and Liz are sitting on the back patio, sipping warm drinks, looking completely normal. Farther back in the yard, Scott is sitting on the ground, calling out numbers.

"What is going on?" Dream asks, and George laughs. Amelia has Harper on her shoulders, James has Mark, and Hannah has Olivia. They're charging at each other and then backing up, the adults kicking around a soccer ball (*football*, Dream corrects himself) while the kids throw a large bouncy ball back and forth. There are goals set up on either end of the yard.

"It's- I don't know how to explain it," George says. "Just wait."

"Dad!" Lucy screeches from Scott's side. "Come play, I wanna play!"

"Next round, sweetheart!" George yells back. "Wait for it- wait for it-"

"And that's sixteen for team girls!" Scott calls out as the bouncy ball is flung into one goal, and all of a sudden the kids are dropping to the ground and Hannah is full-on tackling James. Amelia darts out of the way and scoops up all three kids, then goes running for the goal. Mark drops out of her grip and rolls into it, then stands up through the netting and declares that he's won.

“That’s not fair, my dad already dropped!” Olivia protests. “That’s against the rules!”

“Seriously, what is happening,” Dream whispers to George. George just laughs.

“You’ll figure it out,” he says. “Come on, Lu Lu, we’re in this round!” Lucy screeches with joy and Dream watches as George picks her up with ease and gets her onto his shoulders.

“You’re not going to figure it out,” Ed advises, and Dream glances back to the two. “Trust me, I’ve been watching them play this for six years and I have no idea what’s going on.”

“I do!” Liz says excitedly. “Mark didn’t actually win because James already hit the ground, even though he was in the goal, and according to rule seventeen that doesn’t count as a point.”

“Good luck, son,” Ed tells him, and Dream makes his way over to Scott, who’s watching the game intently and still calling out numbers on occasion.

“I don’t suppose you’ll explain to me what’s going on?” Dream asks, and Scott just grins at him.

Nearly an hour later, Liz declares that it’s time for dinner. Dream has just started getting a feel for the rules- certain numbers mean certain things have to happen, including but not limited to all the kids dropping to the ground and running for the goal while the adults fight each other to try and stop them. They play on teams of girls versus boys, and Lucy proclaims that she doesn’t mind that she’s on the boys’ team because “Auntie Amelia says gender is a construst.”

“Construct, baby,” George tells her. “You don’t even know what that means.”

“It means it isn’t real!” Lucy declares, tugging on George’s hair. “Like unicorns! Now go get the ball, Dad, we’re playing again!”

“No, you’re not!” Liz shouts from the back doorway. “Dinner time, we ordered pizza!” This has all of the kids scrambling down from the shoulders of the adults and rushing for the kitchen. The adults follow much more slowly, and Dream is almost a bit surprised when George slips one hand into his. They get a few looks, all half-hidden smiles.

Dinner is the other real sign of chaos- everyone is practically screaming at each other over the long dining table, including Liz and Ed. Dream feels a bit out of place- certainly, he can be chaotic, but he doesn't want to put off any of these people that seem to like him so much, and he really wants George's family to like him.

"So, Dream," Scott calls from the complete opposite end of the table, over at least two other conversations. "How are you liking the UK?"

"Honestly, anywhere with George is perfect," Dream answers, because it's true, he's not even trying to farm awes or whatever Tommy would call it. However, he can see George (currently enraptured in a conversation with Hannah and Ed) go completely red in the face. "It's been so long, it's just... good to finally see him in person, I guess."

"Oh, yeah, because he's too chicken to move to the States like he wants to," Scott laughs. George pulls himself out of his conversation with a hiss of Scott's name, which just makes the man laugh harder.

"As much as Sapnap and I would love to have him, we don't want him to do anything he isn't comfortable with," Dream shrugs. George's foot hits his under the table, and Scott and Hannah exchange a pointed look at Dream's words.

The rest of dinner is just as chaotic, and after, Ed puts on a movie for the kids to watch. Lucy demands that Dream sits with her, and Dream gives George the best puppy-dog eyes he can muster, meaning the two of them watch all of *Frozen* while the other adults talk in the other room.

"Sorry for dragging you into the movie," Dream says that night as they're getting ready for bed. The kids are all asleep, put to bed carefully by their parents, and he and George are facing opposite directions as they change.

"It's alright," George says. "I like *Frozen*, and I didn't need to hear my family gossiping about us."

"You like *Frozen*?" Dream asks, one eyebrow raised. "I would've pegged you for a *Tangled* guy."

"A man can like multiple Disney movies," George protests. They both turn around at the same time, both fully changed, and then laugh. Dream gestures to the bed, and George flops down onto it. "What about you, then? No, let me guess- *Moana*."

“Yeah,” Dream admits, and George fist-pumps. Dream slides under the covers, and George immediately snuggles up against his side. “Clingy,” Dream huffs with a chuckle, and George whacks his arm. “Do you have a name for that game you guys were playing out there?”

“Chaos,” George tells him, and Dream wheezes.

The next two days pass in almost a blur- the second day is spent inside due to thundering rain, and when it starts to clear up, the kids all slip into the backyard, getting themselves completely drenched. Dream says *fuck it* to himself before he runs out after them, George following without hesitation, and they jump in puddles with the kids and drip water all over the cottage’s nice hardwood floors.

The third day is spent driving around the countryside- George and Dream are put in the “kids car” because neither of them can drive (Dream could, he supposes, but he really hates the whole ‘on the left side of the road’ thing and doesn’t really want to crash someone else’s car). They stop at a few different parks for the kids to play at, and the whole time Dream can barely take his eyes off George.

“You really love him, huh?” Amelia remarks that night. They’re both sipping hot chocolate and watching from the hallway as the kids are carefully tucked into bed. And Dream- Dream doesn’t know what to say. Because he does, but it’s all pretend, it’s not real, no matter how much he wants it to be-

“Yeah,” he responds truthfully. “I really do.”

Chapter 5

Chapter Notes

updates will go back to fridays next week :)

also i don't think i've mentioned this but all of my knowledge of children comes from my multitude of very young cousins so if anything seems off it's because my family is Weird

Day four. George thinks things are going considerably well. There hasn't been a single major accident, which is probably a record for his family, in all honesty. His siblings seem to like Dream, and his nieces and nephew definitely do. His parents have been nothing but kind to Dream, meaning they approve of him, which would be a relief if he and Dream were *actually* dating. Which they aren't. Which George keeps having to remind himself.

George is busy getting Lucy ready, having claimed one of the bathrooms for that purpose, when she looks him very seriously in the eye. He knows she's either about to say something that makes absolutely no sense or actually ask him a question, and he prepares himself for either possibility.

"When is Dream gonna move in?" she asks, and George freezes. "Because Hannah lives with James. So when is Dream gonna live with us?"

"I don't know, baby," George says, straightening out her shirt as best as he can. "It's different. Dream lives in a different country."

"Stupid Americans," Lucy agrees smartly. George blinks once at her.

"Where did you learn that?" he asks.

"Tommy," she says with a grin. "Americans are bad."

"Sure," he laughs, ruffling her hair. She pouts at him, clearly thinking that he's messed it up, and he sighs and pulls out her hairbrush to redo it. "Dream lives in America, meaning it's harder to figure out how to live together. It takes time."

“We could live with him,” Lucy offers. “That would be easier.”

“It wouldn’t,” George says with an amused grin. The brush catches on a tangle- he combed her hair ten minutes ago, how is it already knotted- and he apologizes softly. “It would be harder, Lu, because we’d have to move *two* people instead of one.”

“Dream would have to move two people!” Lucy insists. “Sapnap!”

George laughs. Lucy’s only met Sapnap over FaceTimes and Discord calls, but he’s the same as Dream in that he’s been part of her life for as long as it’s lasted. His online friends are a consistent presence, like guardians that live in computer and phone screens.

“Maybe someday we’ll move to America,” George says softly. “But-”

“But you’re too chicken,” Lucy interrupts. “That’s what Scott said last night.”

George sighs. Sometimes he regrets every decision he’s ever made.

“Yeah,” George says. “I don’t want to leave Grandma and Grandpa and your aunts and uncles and cousins. That’s why I’m nervous.”

The truth is, he’s nervous because he’s in love with Dream, and he has no idea how it would work out, living in the same house together, being around each other when they don’t need to pretend they’re dating. He’s nervous because he doesn’t know if Dream and Sapnap will really want him there, with his daughter, how they’ll react to having a child living in their house. He’s nervous because he loves his daughter more than anything in the world, and he doesn’t want to make it seem like he’s choosing his friends over her. He just wants to do what’s best for her. And he’s so scared, every second of every day, that he’s going to mess it up-

“Dad,” Lucy says quietly. “Keep combing my hair, please.”

George laughs and pulls himself out of his own head. He’s got other things to worry about, like making it through the next week and a half. Then he can have his parental crisis. He finishes getting Lucy ready, grinning as she sprints out of the house and gathers with the other kids in the

driveway, all of them waiting for the adults to unlock the car.

He trusts that James and Hannah, both outside, will be able to keep an eye on them, and makes his way back inside to make sure he's presentable. He finds Dream sitting on their bed, scrolling through his phone.

"Twitter's having a field day speculating about what we're doing," he says, glancing up with a grin. "They want us to do a Christmas stream."

"It's a holiday, we're on paid vacation time," George replies instantly, trying to straighten out his hair in the mirror. "Maybe we can bully them all into abandoning the house tomorrow and do something. Stream from a laptop, I brought mine."

"That would be horrible," Dream snorts. "Can you imagine the complaints?"

"It's better than nothing," George shrugs. "Come on, we're gonna be late. Lunch reservations in half an hour."

Lunch goes well- no one spills anything and no one starts any food fights, which means for the Davidson family it's a complete success. Lucy rides on Dream's back for the walk back to the car, and George pulls out his phone to take a picture. It turns out perfectly, and in the car on the way home, he sets it as his lock screen.

"Simp," Dream mutters, looking over his shoulder. George whacks him on the shoulder playfully, then looks around to make sure none of the kids saw and get any ideas.

They play a few rounds of Chaos in the backyard- Dream's gotten enough of an idea to be able to sub in when necessary, meaning George makes him take Lucy most of the time and sits next to whoever's calling out the very important numbers.

That night, George lets Dream tuck Lucy into bed. He smiles as she wraps her arms around his neck and asks him to read the kids a story, which he agrees to. Olivia picks out a picture book for him to read from, and all four kids rest on the edges of the bunk beds as he sits on the floor and starts to read.

The other adults trickle downstairs, and George feels a flash of pride that they all trust Dream with

the kids. James and Hannah make their way off to bed, and Scott and Amelia corner George by the bottom of the stairs.

“Oh, boy,” he mutters. Amelia scoffs. “What’s up?”

“Are you going to marry him?” Scott asks bluntly, and Amelia elbows him. “What?”

“Slow down, genius,” she hisses at him, then turns back to George. He’s completely frozen, a million thoughts running through his head- this is a fake relationship, Jesus Christ, what has he gotten himself into-

“Sorry,” Scott mutters, not looking very apologetic.

“What Scott *meant* to say,” Amelia says with a glare at her husband. “Is that we see the way you look at him. I don’t think you’ve ever looked at anyone like that, not Lucy’s mum, not any of the people you’ve dated. There’s something special about the way you look at him.”

“It’s like how I look at her,” Scott says, wrapping an arm around Amelia’s waist. “And I married her. So, are you going to marry him?”

“We’ve been dating ten months,” George says, certain that his face is bright red. He considers confessing then and there, and while he knows Amelia would be supportive, Scott wouldn’t be able to keep his mouth shut. “Don’t you think it’s a little soon for that?”

“Mum and Dad love him,” Amelia says, brushing it off. “And the kids love him, and we all love him. Hannah and I agree that he’s perfect for you, and James doesn’t want to kill him. Perfect scenario.”

God, George thinks, what has he gotten himself into?

“Ten months,” he reminds them.

“And you’ve clearly been in love with him for a lot longer than that,” Scott points out. “Come on, we watch your streams and your videos and stuff. We know that he’s wrapped around your little

finger and you're wrapped around his. It's obvious, isn't it?"

George takes a deep breath. Because it's a bit, they do that as a bit (and some small part of his brain asks if the flirting off-camera is a bit, if Dream agreeing to pretend to be his boyfriend for two weeks is a bit, if Dream kissing him on his apartment couch is a bit). Amelia and Scott are both looking at him expectantly.

"If I can," he says, "then yes. I'd like to marry him."

Because he would. Not for tax benefits, or for a visa, or for Lucy to have another parent. Because he's selfish and he's in love and maybe they're the same thing. Because he loves Dream and he wants to marry Dream and he wonders if maybe he always has.

"Good," Amelia says with a smile, and then she instantly changes the subject. "Don't tell James, but Hannah's going to propose to him at Christmas dinner, the ring is gorgeous."

"Holy fuck," George says, eyes widening. That- he hadn't expected that, James and Hannah have been together for ten years and haven't shown any signs of wanting to get married, but he supposes now is as good a time as ever. "I won't say anything, damn--"

"That's where the marriage talk came from," Scott whispers conspiratorially. "We wanted to make sure you wouldn't propose at the same time."

"Ten months, Scott," George reminds him.

"Ten months what?" Dream asks from the top of the stairs. He descends quickly, and George wraps both arms around him, hoping for a little bit of comfort. Scott fake-gags. Amelia rolls her eyes.

"How long we've been together," George says. "They want us to get married."

"Oh, visa marriage, cool," Dream says. "Totally not for any other reason. Not like I'm in love with you or anything."

He says it so earnestly, looking down into George's eyes, that it feels like it has to be true. That George can pretend it's true, if only for a moment. He smiles.

"Yeah," he says. "Not like that."

"I'm going to bed," Amelia says with a pointed look. "Have fun, lovebirds."

"Disgusting," George tells her, and his sister and her husband make their way up the stairs. George stays there with Dream for another moment, arms wrapped around each other. "Carry me up?" George asks, looking up at Dream again. Dream wheezes.

"Up the stairs?" he asks. "You want me to sling you over one shoulder?"

"No," George huffs, and he jumps. Dream nearly cries out, but he manages to catch George bridal-style. They're incredibly close, and George can feel his face getting red. "There. Carry me."

"Yes, princess," Dream says, rolling his eyes and beginning the march up the stairs, and George's blush deepens. He hopes Dream doesn't notice, but by the way he laughs, he clearly does. "You like that?"

"Shut up," George huffs, and Dream laughs again.

"Make me," he responds, an invitation. Fuck, George could kiss him right now, he could lean forward and press their lips together, but there's no one here to witness it and he has no excuse. So he just rolls his eyes and looks away and lets Dream think he's won.

The next morning at breakfast, George's parents agree to take the kids out of the house for the day. The other adults agree to get some couple-time in at the nearest village, meaning he and Dream have the house to themselves to stream. George pulls out his laptop and Dream asks if they should give the fans a little warning.

"I'll change the title of the stream, that'll be warning enough," George says with a grin. He changes the title to 'CHRISTMAS STREAM W/ DREAM.' Dream pulls out his phone and within seconds, Twitter is going crazy. George boots up Minecraft on the laptop and starts a new world, then gestures for Dream to get out of the way. He sits on the bed, out of view of the camera. George takes a seat at the room's desk and starts the stream, adjusting the screen slightly to make

sure there's nothing too visible in the background.

Instantly, there's an influx of people in chat, all of them screaming hello or other terms of excitement at the fact that this is happening. George just laughs, runs a hand through his hair and waves at the camera.

"Before anything else happens, I'm on a laptop with no headphones," he says. "So the quality is going to be terrible, don't yell at me about it. Yell at Dream. Say hi, Dream."

"Hi, Dream!" Dream calls, and chat goes crazy.

"Here, I'm going to make a tweet," George decides. "You all can ask questions and Dream will read them to me."

"I will?" Dream asks, and chat goes crazy again just at the fact that Dream is there, in person, not through a Discord call. George feels like he's going crazy too with Dream there.

"Yes, you will," George says, tweeting from his phone 'QUESTIONS HERE.' "This is my stream and my country, and you do what I say."

"Sure thing," Dream snorts. "Oh, we've got questions already. Who are you with?"

"My parents and siblings," George answers. "But none of them are here right now. Just me and Dream."

"Oh, you shouldn't have said that!" Dream wheezes. "They're DNF truthing again!"

"We're literally streaming, what would we be doing?" George says, looking dead into the camera. "Happy holidays, by the way, that's why Dream is here after all."

"Why am I here?" Dream asks. George turns to look at him. "No, that's the question, they want to know why I'm here."

“Because I wanted to spend the holidays with my best friend?” George says, turning back to the camera with one eyebrow raised. “Obvious answer. Next question.”

“Is DNF real?” Dream reads, and George pretends to slam his head down on the desk.

“If you’re all going to be like that, I’ll just end the stream,” he says jokingly. “No, we’re going to start playing Minecraft now. Speedrunning. Du du du du.” He cringes as soon as the tune of the speedrunning music comes out of his mouth, and chat blows up again.

“Clip that!” Dream calls excitedly. “Someone clip that right now, that was adorable!”

“Shut up!” George yells back, and the stream continues on. Dream reads questions occasionally, and George does his best to answer them. After nearly three hours, he claps his hands together, and chat practically cries out in disappointment.

“You have to say ‘alright,’” Dream tells him earnestly.

“Alright,” George says, holding back a grin. “That’s where we’re going to end for today, I’m afraid- okay, fine, chat, one more question. Dream?”

“Is Dream good with kids?” Dream reads off after a moment. And George thinks of Dream reading all four kids a bedtime story, Dream with Lucy on his shoulders, Dream pressing a soft kiss to Lucy’s knee after she fell on the driveway and scraped it, Dream talking with Mark and Olivia about his videos, Dream letting Harper and Lucy each hang off of one arm, the way Lucy looks at Dream like he hung the stars.

“Yeah,” George answers after a moment, swallowing harshly. He pulls himself together, puts his streamer face back on, and grins. “Yeah, he’s really good with my nieces and nephews, actually, it’s kind of adorable. No, chat, I’m not farming aw’s, I’m telling the truth. Dream is good with kids, real! Not fake!”

Dream wheezes, and when George turns to look at him, he’s got a brilliant smile on his face. George turns back to see a multitude of green and blue hearts next to each other being spammed in his chat, and that’s how he knows it’s really time to end before he says something stupid.

“Okay, that’s where we’re done for today, I guess. Maybe we’ll stream again, who knows. Happy

holidays everyone!” He waves one hand frantically at the camera while the other ends the stream, and as soon as he’s certain it’s done, he falls back in the chair.

“Tired?” Dream asks with an amused grin.

“Very,” George groans. He pulls himself out of the chair and flops onto the bed next to Dream, then rolls over into his best friend’s arms. “Nap time.”

“Whatever you say,” Dream laughs, and the next thing George knows, he’s out like a light.

When he wakes up, there’s the sound of movement from downstairs. He’s still tangled in Dream’s arms, and there’s another small body pressed near his- Lucy. They must’ve gotten back while he was asleep. Lucy is leaning completely on his chest, watching Dream play games on his phone. Dream grins when he sees that George is awake.

“Dad!” Lucy cries. “We went to the park, it was so fun, was your stream good?”

“Yeah, it was good,” George says with a sleepy grin. “How long have you been here, baby?”

“I don’t know,” Lucy shrugs. “Dream is really good at this game, you should watch-”

Never one to deny his daughter, George shifts so that they can both watch Dream, and he tries to ignore the soft grin on Dream’s face the whole time.

He makes a promise to himself, then and there, that by the end of these two weeks, he’s going to tell Dream he’s in love with him. For better or for worse, he’ll confess. And they’ll stay friends no matter what, he knows that, but he’s so overwhelmingly in love he doesn’t think he’ll be able to hold it back for much longer.

All for the better, then, he thinks as Dream dies in-game. Lucy cuddles deeper between the two of them, and George presses a kiss to her head, and lets himself drift back off to sleep with his two greatest loves so close to his heart.

Chapter 6

Needless to say, Dream isn't necessarily *excited* for Christmas. George, along with the rest of the family, has made several remarks about how the extended family isn't necessarily the most open people in the world. Between James and Hannah choosing not to get married for so long, George being a single father, and Amelia's *very* opinionated political stance, George tells Dream that their little section of the family is sort of the black sheep.

"Isn't the black sheep supposed to be one person?" Dream asks.

"Well, we've got a whole nuclear family as the black sheep," George says. "Just... be prepared."

Ed and Liz pull him aside the night before Christmas Eve, six days into their stay, and tell him that if he ever needs a break from the extended family, he's more than welcome to disappear for a few hours.

"We'll tell them you're talking to your own family, they'll understand," Liz says. "My parents can be... a lot, to say the least."

"Thank you," Dream says honestly. "I'm sure it'll be okay."

Ed actually laughs. "That's what I said my first Christmas with them, and it ended with three people storming out in a huff." Liz swats him on the shoulder and makes a comment about not scaring Dream. He's sure it'll be fine- it'll be like any other family Christmas. It's meeting his fake boyfriend's extended family for the first time. It's good practice for if he ever gets an actual partner.

He laughs to himself at the thought. As if he could ever find an actual partner better than George. Speaking of, as he makes his way upstairs, he pauses outside his and George's room as he hears voices.

"When are you going to marry him?" It's clearly Lucy's voice, and Dream hears the unmistakable sound of George nearly choking in surprise.

"What?" George's voice says. "Why would you ask that, honey?"

“Well, you love him,” Lucy says plainly and clearly.

“That doesn’t mean I have to marry him,” George points out. “Uncle James and Auntie Hannah aren’t married.”

“Olivia says they’re going to be,” Lucy pouts. “I think you and Dream should get married.”

“It’s not that easy, sweetheart,” George says, and he sounds fondly exasperated. Dream smiles and leans against the wall, ear pressed to the door so he can eavesdrop on the conversation better. He feels like maybe he shouldn’t be listening in on this, but then again, it’s not like George is actually going to ask him to marry him, right? Right.

“Well then, what’s the hard part?” Lucy asks. “He’s not going to say no. He loves you. And you love him. So marry him.”

“Maybe someday, baby,” George murmurs, and Dream can imagine him holding Lucy close and pressing his lips to her hair. “Why don’t you find him and ask him to read you guys a story again, yeah?”

“Yeah!” Lucy cries, immediately distracted by the change of topic, and Dream opens the door before she can. She’s only halfway off the bed, and she gives a cry of delight and runs into his arms. Dream picks her up and swings her around for a moment. “Dream, will you read us a story again tonight?”

“Of course!” he says, grinning widely at her. He glances at George, who’s watching them with a fond look. He winks, and George goes red. “Come on, let’s get ready for bed first.”

“Okay!” Lucy squirms in his grip, and he sets her down. George slowly gets off the bed and makes his way over to Dream.

“You’re so good with her,” he says, pressing his forehead against Dream’s chest. “Thank you. For being here.”

“I wouldn’t trade it for the world,” Dream says, and he’s telling the truth. “I better go find a good

story to read them. Wouldn't want to disappoint."

"Of course," George laughs.

The next morning finds them waking up at what feels like the crack of dawn as the doorbell frantically rings. George makes his way slowly to the bedroom door, only to immediately turn around as his mother runs past and waves for him to stay where he is.

"What's going on?" Dream mumbles, still half asleep.

"Grandparents are here," George replies, diving back under the covers. "Which means we get to pretend they didn't wake us up and stay in bed for a while longer while my mother deals with them."

"Sounds perfect," Dream says with a yawn, opening his arms and letting George snuggle into them. They stay there for a while longer before there's a pounding on the door and Lucy lets herself in.

"Nana and Papa are here," she whispers after she throws herself onto the bed. It takes Dream a moment to realize they'd be Lucy's great-grandparents. Which means when they finally make it downstairs, completely dressed and ready to go, Dream is expecting a very elderly couple sitting in the living room and talking quietly with George's parents. He is *not* expecting what he sees instead.

They're the first ones down, meaning Dream gets to bear witness to a very fit looking elderly man carving an entire turkey, with Ed flitting around trying to help. An older woman who definitely doesn't look like she should be a great-grandmother sees Lucy and immediately cries out with pure joy. Dream watches Liz's shoulders sag as her mother turns away and scoops Lucy up. Lucy looks immensely uncomfortable as the woman swings her back and forth.

"Little Lucy-poo, it's so good to see you!" she cries. "And Georgie, come here, give Nana a hug!" Dream smiles as George reluctantly steps forward and lets the woman smash his cheeks together, and Lucy laughs out loud.

Then the woman spots him, and her entire demeanor changes. Her face drops and she steps forward so that she's right next to him, staring up at him. She has to be at least an entire foot shorter than him, and Dream has never felt so intimidated.

“So,” she says. “This is the boy.”

“Yes, Mom,” Liz says, sounding exhausted. Dream sees George pat her on the back out of the corner of his eye- he’s too focused on what he thinks is a staring contest with George’s maternal grandmother. “That’s the boy. Please don’t scare him away, we like him.”

Dream looks up at her, and she winks at him. George’s grandmother makes a ‘hmpf’ noise and reaches up with one hand to grab Dream’s face.

“He’s handsome enough,” she remarks, turning his head from side to side. “And strong. Should be good around the house. But can he provide for a family?”

She turns back to George, who looks like he doesn’t know what to say. Liz’s eyes are wide. She looks back to Dream.

“What do you do for a living, boy?” she asks. George is frantically shaking his head. Ah, so she doesn’t know about the whole *minecraft youtube* thing.

“Uh,” he says. “Computer... programming.”

“Computer programming,” she repeats.

“Video game developing, and stuff,” he says with a nod. George flashes him a thumbs-up. “Coding.”

“Coding,” she huffs. “You kids and your technology. I don’t even know what coding is. Video games are for children.”

George turns a laugh into a cough. Liz pats him on the back.

“Uh,” Dream says, because he really doesn’t know what else to say. George’s grandmother finally lets go of his face and takes a step back.

“Is he good with children?” she asks, turning back to Liz.

“Excellent,” Liz says quickly, nodding. “Lucy loves him.”

“I do,” Lucy confirms from where she’s standing against George’s legs. She’s been watching the entire exchange with interest, but she seems to have picked up on the fact that they are *not* mentioning Dream and George’s real jobs.

“He’s incredible with kids, Nan,” George says quietly. “He’s perfect, really. I don’t know if you could find anything wrong with him.”

Dream wants to laugh, but George is looking at his grandmother so earnestly, he doesn’t. There’s plenty wrong with him, he knows that, but he’s sure he can put on a front for George’s family.

“Hmph,” she says, and she nods and holds out a hand to Dream. “I’m Mary. You’re welcome to call me Nan or Nana if you would like.”

“Clay,” Dream offers, shaking her hand. “It’s very nice to meet you, ma’am.”

“Polite,” she says with a nod. “And a good handshake. I suppose I won’t chase him out of the house. I would have preferred a nice young lady, but he’ll do.”

Liz and George both let out breaths of relief. She turns away as more people begin coming down the stairs and focuses her attention on them, and Dream makes his way over to George. Liz pats his arm and gives him an approving smile.

“Good job!” Lucy stage whispers to him. “You passed the Nana Test.”

“That was a test?” Dream says in mock surprise, eyes wide. Lucy giggles and nods. “Oh my gosh, thank God I passed.”

They spend the rest of the day introducing Dream to people as more and more of them arrive. Dream didn’t think George’s family would be *huge*, necessarily, but apparently on his mother’s side alone he’s got four sets of aunts and uncles and about twelve cousins, plus their whole

families. It totals approximately forty kids running around in the backyard and way too many adults taking up every surface in the house.

“They’re just here for Christmas Eve,” George reminds him after what feels like the fifth blatantly homophobic comment and the fiftieth implicit one. They’re hiding in the laundry room, Scott and Amelia passing a bottle back and forth next to them. “Dad’s family tomorrow, they’re much better, I promise.”

“They are,” Amelia agrees as she takes a shot out of the bottle cap. “Drink, Dream?”

“No thanks,” Dream says. James and Hannah appear from around the corner, looking relieved to see them.

“Thank God, it’s terrible out there,” Hannah says, reaching for the bottle. Amelia passes it quickly, and Hannah takes a swig. “If I hadn’t quit smoking I’d be going through an entire pack.”

“Smoking is bad for you,” a small voice says, and all six adults jump as they realize Lucy and Harper are both standing in the hallway, clutching hands. “Can we hide in here?”

James is hiding the bottle of alcohol behind his back. Dream thinks someone should do something.

“No, we were just going out!” he says, reaching out to scoop them each up under one arm. “Come on, let’s go play outside.”

“Thanks, Dream!” James calls, and George follows him out as they weave through the crowd to make it back outside, where a mass of kids is playing soccer (football, Dream corrects himself) with the goals they’d been using for Chaos just the day before.

Dinner is a chaotic mess, with at least six different tables set up to accommodate everyone. There’s another round of both explicit and implicit homophobic comments that Dream does his best to ignore, but by the end of the night, he can see George bristling with rage. He knows that look—George is about to snap at someone, so he leans down and whispers to Lucy, “Baby, can you get your dad out of here?” He gives her a look, praying that a kid as young as she is will get what he means.

“Dad!” Lucy cries, grinning at Dream. “Dad, I want to show you something!”

She grabs George's hand and drags him out of the room, and George casts a confused look over his shoulder at Dream. Dream doesn't see him again until everyone is leaving for the night- it's nearly midnight, most of the kids are being carried out to cars by their parents, and George makes his way downstairs with a sleeping Lucy in his arms just as the last people are making their way out.

"We'll see you soon, Mom," Liz promises to George's grandmother. She nods and sends one last glare at Dream, then kisses George on the cheek and Lucy on the head and makes her way outside. Liz closes the door behind her, and everyone still downstairs cheers. Dream watches, bemused, as George slumps into his arms.

"And we'll see you all next year!" Ed cries, hugging Liz tightly. "Good job, honey."

"That was terrible," Amelia remarks. "I'm exhausted. Are the kids asleep?"

"All of 'em are in bed," Scott confirms. He spots Lucy in George's arms, who's in Dream's arms, and smiles. "Except Lucy, apparently."

"I'll get them to bed," Dream smiles. He manages to wake George up for the walk up the stairs and tucks Lucy in quickly. He makes his way back to their room, George already out cold. He flops down on the bed in his clothes, telling himself he's just going to rest for a moment or two, and the next thing he knows he's out like a light.

Chapter 7

Chapter Notes

i actually had a ton of fun with this chapter jdfjks hope you enjoy!

George is, to say the least, a bit confused when Lucy cries at dinner that she wants to show him something, but he follows his daughter nonetheless. She takes him upstairs to the room that he and Dream share, and then grins at him.

“What did you want to show me, baby?” he asks. He’s still frustrated with his family members, so he’s glad she pulled him away before he started yelling. He just don’t know why.

“Oh,” Lucy says, her face falling. “Um. Dream said to get you out of there. You were getting the angry face.”

George tries to hold back a laugh- of course Dream saw him getting close to snapping, of course this is Dream’s doing.

“Well, now we’re here,” George says, holding out his arms. Lucy jumps into them and buries herself against his chest, and he holds his daughter tight. “Do you want to call Sapnap, or something?”

“Yes!” Lucy cries, perking up. “Yes, please!”

“Okay, let me just...” He wrangles his phone out of his back pocket and texts Sapnap quickly to make sure he isn’t busy. Sapnap responds with a thumbs-up, so George hits the FaceTime button and adjusts Lucy on his lap.

“He-ey!” Sapnap calls when he answers the phone. His blurry image appears on the screen, cutting in and out of focus. Lucy waves wildly. “Lemme just get somewhere private, hang on-”

“Sapnap, I meant only if you weren’t with family,” George sighs. Lucy imitates him, and Sapnap laughs on the other end of the phone.

“Yeah, well, I needed a break,” Sarnap huffs. The video quality gets a bit better as there’s the sound of a door closing, and Sarnap’s grin widens. “Merry Christmas!”

“It’s Christmas Eve, silly,” Lucy corrects him.

“My mistake,” Sarnap laughs. “Merry Christmas Eve, Lucy.”

“Thank you!” she cries.

“Have you gotten any gifts yet?” he asks, and Lucy shakes her head.

“That’s tomorrow, too,” she insists. “For us, at least. Did you?”

“Your dad sent me some really cool stuff,” Sarnap says with a nod.

“You opened it already?” George groans. “That was for tomorrow!”

“Yeah, well, I was anxious,” Sarnap shrugs. “Thanks, by the way. Your gift is me letting Dream come over there.”

“Sure,” George snorts. “Seriously, though, what’d you get me?” He’s teasing, at this point, and he knows Sarnap can tell. Lucy is practically on the edge of her seat (or at least, the edge of his lap) waiting to find out.

“You’ll see,” Sarnap says. “I got Lucy some stuff, too.”

“Yes!” Lucy cries, waving both hands in the air. George loops an arm around her waist to keep her from falling.

“What’d you get Dream?” Sarnap asks suddenly, and George blanches.

“Jesus Christ,” he says. “I forgot to get Dream something.”

Sapnap bursts into laughter, dipping out of the frame for a moment as he hunches over. When he’s done, George is just sitting there, staring off into the distance.

“You know what you do in this situation, right?” Sapnap says.

“No,” George says, focusing back in on Sapnap’s face. “What do I do, Sapnap, please help me, oh my God-”

“You kiss him,” Sapnap says seriously.

“Ewww,” Lucy says, wrinkling her nose and looking up at George. “You’re not gonna do that, right?”

“Sapnap,” George says, ignoring his daughter for the time being. Because he’s seriously considering it, at this point, just getting it over with if Dream is going to reject him even though he doesn’t think that’s going to happen. Sapnap is grinning wide, like he knows what’s coming next. “You know him best. How would he take that?”

“Oh, he’d love it,” Sapnap says instantly. “Dude. You guys have been dancing around each other for, like, years now. If you don’t tell him as a happy holidays gift, *I* will. *That* will be my gift to you, fucking- confessing for you.”

“Dad,” Lucy stage-whispers. “Sapnap said a naughty word.”

“I heard, baby,” George says. He’s thinking about Sapnap’s words. Okay. He’s going to do this. He’s actually going to do this. “Thank you, Sapnap.”

“Of course, dude,” Sapnap says. “You guys are my best friends. I just want you both to be happy. And you too, Lucy. You’re my bestest friend.”

“You’re *my* bestest friend!” Lucy says excitedly. They talk for a little while longer, and eventually Sappnap has to go back to his own family. George and Lucy make their way downstairs to say goodbye to people, Lucy falling asleep in his arms, and he feigns exhaustion to get Dream to carry him up the stairs. Just because he can. At some point Dream collapses on the bed next to him, still fully clothed, and George rolls over and out of bed.

He digs a bunch of pre-wrapped presents out of the bottom of his suitcase and brings them downstairs to put under the tree in the living room. It seems like no one else is awake, a majority of them already having placed their gifts, apart from a light in the kitchen. George makes his way in to find his mother sitting at the table and paging through a book.

“Thank you,” he says quietly, sitting down across from her. She lifts her reading glasses up and gives him a look.

“What for?” she asks.

“I dunno,” he replies. “Hosting us. Being a good mom. Being a good person.”

She smiles and shakes her head like he’s just said something stupid but endearing. Maybe he has. He doesn’t know how to be a good son, not really, but he’s trying. He doesn’t know how to be a good son or a good brother or a good father, but he’s doing his damn best, and that’s what counts, isn’t it? His family is happy. His daughter is happy. That’s what matters.

“Georgie,” his mother says softly. “What’s on your mind?”

“I’m in love with Dream,” George blurts out. Her facial expression doesn’t change.

“Well, I assumed,” she says. “Considering you’ve been dating for ten months.”

“No, I mean-” he starts, and then stops. “We’re not. Actually dating. We just- he agreed to pretend to be my boyfriend for the holidays. For you guys, I guess. So you would all get off my back about- about finding a partner, another parent for Lucy, but- I mean, I knew I was in love with him before this, but seeing how *good* he is with her, I’m- I love him, Mum. I love him more than words can describe.”

His mother’s facial expression still doesn’t change, but her eyes look... sadder, almost.

“Georgie,” she says again, more seriously this time. “First off, I’m sorry. For not recognizing how you felt about all this. I shouldn’t have pressured you, but, you know-”

“I know,” he interrupts, and she smiles.

“Secondly, that boy loves you more than anything in the world,” she continues. He blushes, and she laughs. “Trust me when I say I can see it. He worships the ground you walk on. All you would have to do is say the word and I think he’d do anything for you, and Lucy too, I really do.”

“And that’s just it,” George says. “I think, at least. It’s that I *know* how much he cares about me, and about Lucy, and- it’s terrifying. Knowing that I could move to Florida and leave it all behind and she’d be taken care of, she’d be *loved* just as much as she is here.”

“And you know I don’t necessarily *want* you to be an ocean away, but if that’s what makes you happy, then that’s what makes you happy,” his mother says. “Besides, it’s not like you can’t afford a plane ticket or three to come back every once in a while. It’s a scary thing. Love is terrifying. But that’s what makes it so beautiful.”

George nods, and his mother extends one hand across the table. He takes it and she squeezes hard.

“Tell him how you feel,” she says. “For real. I promise you, it’ll be okay.”

“Thank you,” he says, and it comes out choked, and she smiles again. “For everything.”

“Of course,” she says. “I’m your mother. It’s what I’m here for. And- I’ll keep this between us.”

He laughs, and that comes out a bit choked, too. “Thank you. Again.”

“Go get some sleep,” she says with a firm nod. “Tomorrow’s a big day.”

He nods and she stands up at the same time he does, opening her arms for a hug. He embraces her tightly, knowing that everything’s going to be okay, and then he makes his way up the stairs. He

slips into bed next to Dream, who's still in his dress pants, and he shakes his head fondly. He loves this stupid idiot. And it's a terrifying concept, but that's the whole point, isn't it?

They wake up on Christmas morning to the kids absolutely screaming.

Dream groans and rolls over; he hasn't had to deal with that for a long, long time now. George, evidently, was prepared for this scenario, based on the way he rolls out of Dream's arms and then keeps rolling until he hits the ground with a thud. Dream is up instantly, peering over the edge of the mattress to make sure George is okay. His best friend is grinning at him.

Lucy slams the door open a moment later, diving on top of the bed. She's clearly disappointed by the lack of her father, but she chooses to jump into Dream's arms instead.

"It's Christmas!" she cries. "Presents!"

Dream laughs and picks her up as he stands- he managed to get out of bed at some point in the middle of the night and change into his pajamas, thank God- then helps George up off the ground.

"You gotta get rolling fast, or else you'll never get up," George says smartly, and Dream snorts at the pun. They make their way downstairs and immediately there's more screaming.

It snowed outside. There's a fine layer of white covering everything, and there are still flakes falling. The kids are staring out with wonder, clearly overjoyed, and Dream grins. He's seen snow before, albeit only a few times, and it's beautiful. He turns to look at George, who's staring out the window with a wide smile.

They sit with the other adults as the kids tear open the wrapping paper on gift after gift, shrieking after each one and displaying their treasures proudly. The adults save their own gifts for later, when the kids are asleep, George whispering to Dream that it's what they always do. They have breakfast and then get ready for the other side of the family to come over.

George's father's side of the family is a lot more chaotic, Dream discovers, and also a lot smaller. The kids- maybe eight of them total, he counts- build snowmen in the front yard under the watchful eyes of their parents as they pass warm drinks around. The extended family, thankfully, leaves

before dinner, which is a loud and rambunctious affair as per usual.

Dream calls his own family right after dinner, knowing they're probably having lunch around then. His siblings yell at him that he better be having a good time, Drista gives him an extremely knowing look that clearly says they'll talk later, and his father tells him he better be behaving. His mother manages to get him alone before he goes back to George's family, looking at him seriously.

"You'd better tell that boy you love him," she says seriously.

"I will, Ma," he says. He will. It might not be those words exactly, but he's got a surprise, if George wants it, that has the same meaning. She tells him she loves him and he wishes her a merry Christmas, promises he'll see her soon, and she blows him a kiss before she hangs up.

He and George sit with the kids as they watch Christmas movies and promptly fall asleep, then carry them all up to bed with the promise of a grand snowball fight the next day. The adults exchange their gifts; Dream wasn't expecting to get anything, but he's pleasantly surprised to find that he gets small homemade gifts from every member of the family. He had texted George about what to get people, so he passes out his own gifts in return.

The highlight of the night is easily when Hannah gives James a small box, then slides down onto one knee as he opens it. There are quiet cheers from the family so they don't wake up the kids as she slides the ring onto his finger, James nodding eagerly. The two of them head off shortly after that, followed by Amelia and Scott. Ed makes his way to the stairs, holding Liz's hand tightly. Liz turns back and sends George a look that Dream doesn't miss. He turns to see George nodding, then smiling mischievously when he sees Dream looking at him.

"What about me?" he asks teasingly. "I don't see any gifts from you with my name on them."

"Well, that's the thing," Dream says, and he wipes his hands on his pants out of nerves. This is it, the moment of truth, the moment of reckoning. "I haven't bought them yet."

"Oh?" George asks, and Dream clears his throat.

"Plane tickets," he says, and he blanches. "Um- only if. Only if you want them, of course, but. Plane tickets for you and Lucy. To come to Florida. The return tickets wouldn't be included, unless you wanted them, of course, but-"

He stops and takes a deep breath. George nods at him encouragingly.

“I want you to move in with me and Sapnap,” he blurts out, forcing the words out of his mouth. If he doesn’t say them now, he might not ever. He’s looking down at his lap because he has no idea what the look on George’s face will be. “I want- God, George. I want to wake up every day with you by my side, I want Lucy’s toys to be scattered around our living room, I want to introduce you both to my family, I want- I want to live with you. And with Lucy. I want us to make our own family, the three of us and Sapnap, and-”

“Dream,” George says, reaching out to grip both of his hands. He takes a few more deep breaths, in time with George’s own, and George reaches one hand out to tilt his chin up. They make eye contact, and George- George is beaming. “I would love that.”

“You would?” Dream squeaks, and then he clears his throat. “Um- you would? I thought- I dunno, I thought the idea of it was too terrifying-”

“Well, that’s what love’s all about, isn’t it?” George says. “It’s terrifying. It’s beautiful.”

There’s a beat as Dream processes the words that just came out of George’s mouth. It hits him softly and then all at once, George said love, he said love, love, *love* -

George is still smiling, clearly seeing the recognition in Dream’s eyes, and he leans forward slightly.

“Merry Christmas, Dream,” he says. “I kind of, er, forgot to get you a gift. So I hope this makes up for it.”

He shifts, then presses their foreheads together. They breathe in each other’s air for a moment, Dream waiting for George to make the first move, because he *knows* what George is trying to say. George is trying to say everything Dream’s been too afraid to.

“I’m in love with you, Dream,” George breathes out. “I’m so, so in love with you. For real.”

“For real,” Dream echoes, and then he breaks into a grin. “You’re in love with me for real.”

“I’m in love with you for real,” George confirms, still grinning, and Dream laughs.

“I’m in love with *you* for real!” he cries, and then there’s no space between them. He doesn’t even know which of them moved first, but they’re kissing, and it’s like every single dream he’s ever had has come true. They’re kissing on the couch in some winter holiday cottage George’s parents own and George is going to move in with him and Dream is going to get to see him every day, Dream is going to get to see Lucy everyday, they’re going to be their own little family and it’s going to be messy and it’s going to be awkward and it’s going to be *perfect*.

He couldn’t ask for a better gift.

Chapter 8

Chapter Notes

and that's a wrap! thank you all for joining me on this lovely ride, it was a nice break from all the angst i've been writing lmao. if you enjoyed, consider a user sub! they're free and it means the world, and i have a lot of cool projects coming up :)

also i have no idea how visas work so just roll with it

The next week is a flurry of laughter and joy. Dream is thrilled out of his mind the whole time- not that anything seems different to anyone else, of course. Now he can hold and kiss and be affectionate with George and he knows that it's *real*. They sleep in the same bed and George curls around him and it's real, it's so very real.

The aftermath of Christmas is a lazy day spent inside. The next day, however- the ninth day of the trip- is the annual snowball fight. Dream is given approximately no explanation about what's going to happen, so when Scott and Hannah drag him to one side of the yard and tell him they need to start building a snow fort, he goes along with it.

"Come on, Dream!" Scott yells. "You play Minecraft for a living, you should be better at building!" Hannah laughs uproariously, and there's muffled laughter from the other side of the yard, where George, Amelia, and James are building their own snow fort.

The kids come running outside minutes later, dressed in snow gear by Ed and Liz and looking ready to absolutely decimate the adults. Lucy rushes to Dream's side, claiming she wants to be on his team, and the other three kids also claim they want to be on his team.

"Oh, yeah," Hannah says. "We have a fighting chance this year."

"We've lost six years in a row," Scott adds. "And this has been going on for six years."

And indeed, even with all four kids on their side, it doesn't seem like they're doing too good. The Davidson siblings work like a machine, packing snow together and lobbing it at Dream's side every time one of them dares poke their head up. They don't even show mercy on the kids, but the kids don't show mercy right back- Hannah quietly organizes a raid while Dream and Scott take all

the fire, and all four kids rush around the front of the house to attack from behind.

“Go, go, go!” Scott yells, and Dream laughs as they pelt George and Amelia with snow (James being completely covered by children). For the first time in Davidson family history, Ed and Liz- the official judges of the event, who have been laughing at them the whole time- declare the in-laws' side the winners of the annual snowball fight.

The rest of the week passes by in a blur, and Dream loves every second of it. All too soon they're getting ready to leave, packing bags and throwing them into trunks of cars. The kids get a little emotional as they say goodbye to Dream, all of them telling him to mention them in his next video. He promises he will, and as George says goodbye to his siblings, Dream says goodbye to the other in-laws.

“It's been great meeting you, man,” Scott says, shaking his hand. “Have fun back home, yeah? And try and get George to move in with you.”

Dream smiles- he and George talked about it, late at night as they laid in bed together. Soon, they said. It'll happen soon.

“Take care, Dream,” Hannah says, giving him a hug, and then George's siblings approach him.

“Treat him well, yeah?” James says, Amelia nodding behind him. “And Lucy, too.”

“I will,” Dream promises.

The drive back feels longer than the drive there, Lucy singing along to Disney songs while Dream attempts to join her. George is smiling at them the whole time, like there's nowhere else he'd rather be.

His parents drop them off at George's apartment, and as Ed goes to help George unload some of their things, Liz approaches Dream and pulls him aside slightly.

“George told me everything,” she murmurs, holding onto both of his hands. “And let me just say- he loves you a lot. And I know you love him a lot, too. So, when he does move- when, not if- you take care of him. Take care of them both.”

“I will, ma’am,” Dream says, and Liz pulls him into a tight hug.

“None of that,” she says. “You’re family.”

And his heart is so full, knowing George’s family is his own, it feels so *right*. Liz pats him on the back and pulls away, then goes to hug George and Lucy. Ed shakes Dream’s hand, giving him a knowing look, then claps him on the elbow.

“You’re a good man, son,” he says, and Dream smiles. “Thank you.”

He doesn’t know what Ed is thanking him for, but as he thinks about it, he knows what Ed is trying to say. A thank you for being there for George, for being there for Lucy. Dream nods and lets go, just in time for Lucy to jump into his arms, still humming Disney songs.

They’ve got one more night before Dream’s flight home, one night for him to pretend they’re already a little family. He and George attempt to make dinner while Lucy watches TV, and they end up ordering a pizza because they’re too busy kissing in the kitchen to pay attention to what they’re making. They eat dinner on the couch and watch movies until Lucy falls asleep, and Dream carries her to bed and helps George tuck her in.

“I don’t want you to go,” George confesses that night as they lie together in bed, and Dream pulls him in closer and rests their foreheads together.

“I’ll see you soon,” he promises, and George smiles giddily.

“Soon,” he echoes.

Leaving is the hardest thing Dream has ever done. Lucy cries on the sidewalk as they wait for his taxi and clutches his neck, begging him not to go. He crouches down and holds onto her tight.

“We’ll see each other again, Lucy,” Dream promises, and it’s making him tear up a little bit.

“But not soon,” Lucy says. “We’re gonna miss you too much.”

George crouches down, too, and wraps his arms around both of them.

“We are,” he agrees. “But someday we’re gonna be able to see Dream every day, okay, Lucy? I promise.”

“Okay,” Lucy sniffles, pulling away and leaning back into George’s arms. “Okay.”

The car pulls up and they load Dream’s bag inside, and George pulls Dream in for one last long, lingering kiss. He scoops Lucy into his arms and they both wave as Dream drives away. The only thing that keeps him from jumping out of the moving car and running back to them is the fact that he knows he’ll see them both again soon.

It takes three months of relentless work before George and Lucy are approved to move to Florida. Dream and George talk every night, like they usually do, only there’s a lot more meaning behind it this time. Sapnap finds out about their relationship approximately two hours after Dream’s return, which George knows because of the fact that his phone starts ringing at three in the morning and doesn’t stop until he picks it up. He’s screaming at the top of his lungs with pure joy, and George almost hangs up on him before he realizes what Sapnap is screaming about.

When they get the approval, the first thing George does is call Dream. He’s crying so hard he can barely talk, and thank God Lucy is with his mother, because he doesn’t want her to see him like this.

“Baby,” Dream says. “Hey, what’s wrong, what’s-”

“It was approved,” George manages to choke out. “We got approved, Dream, we’re moving in with you- we’re coming to Florida, we’re gonna be a family, *Dream* -”

And then Dream is laughing, too, laughing so hard that George thinks he starts crying, and they both laugh and cry on the phone together with pure joy.

It doesn't take long after that before George is packing his things, his siblings all helping as they prepare for the move. They send over most of his and Lucy's things a few days before the two are set to follow, along with Cat. They stay in his parents' house, George going around to say goodbye to his friends in the UK before the move happens.

"So you and Dream are finally *actually* together, yeah?" Wilbur asks, and Tommy spits out his drink. George goes beet red, all the confirmation they need, and Wilbur bursts into laughter.

Thankfully, just like they did with Lucy, they agree to keep his and Dream's relationship a secret. Not that it might stay that way for long- George has no idea how long he'll be able to go when he wants to scream about his love for Dream in every place imaginable.

They have a family dinner the night before George and Lucy are set to leave, and saying goodbye to his siblings is hard, but he knows he'll be back soon. Saying goodbye to his parents the next morning is worse as he hugs them tightly at the airport.

"You take care of yourself, yeah?" his father says. "We know you'll be safe, but-"

"Oh, hush, Ed," his mother says, pressing kisses to Lucy's head. "Call us every weekend, okay? Or every night if you want to, and make sure Lucy is there, and-"

"I'll be okay, Mom," George says, and he can't help but keep from beaming. He's going to be with Dream, and Lucy is coming with him, and it's all going to be okay. Better than okay- it's going to be *perfect*.

Lucy is restless on the plane, and George doesn't blame her. He can barely contain his excitement, practically bursting at the seams. He texts Dream as soon as they're off the plane, and Dream sends back a wink. It doesn't take long before a woman approaches him at baggage claim. He has Lucy in one arm and Cat's carrier in the other, and she taps his shoulder politely.

He turns back, and he wonders if this is how Dream felt a few months ago, because this woman looks so distinctly like Dream it's uncanny.

"Hello, dear," she says, grinning at him. "It's nice to finally meet you in person. I've heard a lot about you two."

“Three,” Lucy says, pointing at Cat. “You look like Dream!”

“I’m his mother,” she says, smiling kindly at Lucy. “How was your flight?”

She helps them get the rest of their bags and drives them to Dream’s house- *their* house. She promises she’ll see them soon as she drops them off, and within seconds Sapnap is barreling toward them.

“George!” he yells, slamming into them at full speed and wrapping his arms around both of them. “And Lucy! It’s so good to see you, holy-”

“No bad words!” Lucy yells, whacking Sapnap on the head, and George laughs. He looks past Sapnap’s shoulders and sees Dream, standing in the doorway, and without a moment’s hesitation he’s dropping Lucy into Sapnap’s arms and rushing for the love of his life. Dream laughs and meets him halfway, picking him up and spinning him around, and after giving them a moment Sapnap joins them. Lucy shrieks and clings to Dream, and Dream presses his lips against the side of George’s head.

“Welcome home,” he says, sounding like he’s going to cry. George beams, one arm around Sapnap and one arm around Dream. It’s all he could have asked for and more. “Welcome home.”

End Notes

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comments/kudos/subs/etc are always appreciated!!!! <3

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